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## Beranger to Couture.

[WRITTEN FOR THE BOSTON COURIER.]

You come too late, for singing time is over,  
The fire is out that warmed my heart so long,  
And the dead whiteness of the ashes cover  
No coal to kindle at the breath of song.  
Put up your pencil, for you would repeat you  
The libel it might perpetrate on truth.  
Go back! Go back! and say to those that sent you,  
A poet should be painted in his youth.

You should have come when we were young together,  
My songs and I, in the spring days ere yet  
The sullen clouds had conquered the bright weather,  
Or time had tamed the passion of Lisette;  
When Love for us forsook his wide dominions,  
And made his kingdom in a garret high,  
Sat at our board and warmed us with his pinions,  
With but a roof betwixt us and the sky.

It matters not that Fate is late in bringing  
The due for service done so long before;  
I am content—my joy was in the singing,  
And Fame, though rich, when matched with that is poor.  
What kinship have sharp winds and leafless branches  
With days of May, soft-aired and blossoming?  
Why should you come to link me in my autumn  
With lays that only breathe of love and spring?

But they, my song-brood, they are still unfaded;  
Time that breaks me can work them no annoy,—  
Ah! my fair children, each of you is laded  
With my Life's life, my sorrow and my joy.  
You should have come when we were young together,  
White hairs and wrinkles would but do them wrong;  
And when my truer self ye fain would gather,  
Lay down your brush—you cannot paint a song!

Turn ye to them; in their triumphant scorning  
Of the weak years read my revenge on Time:  
They still are fresher than the dews of morning,  
More ardent than the summer's fervid prime.  
I live in them, I clasp them to my bosom,  
In their immortal youth I claim a part;  
And since my brow is white with winter's blossom,  
O limner! spare my face and paint—my heart.

JOSEPH BRADFORD.

## Madame Parepa-Rosa.

The London Musical World, Jan. 24 has the following within mourning lines:

"At 12 o'clock on Wednesday night last Euphrosyne Parepa-Rosa departed this life. So far as her removal is a private and domestic calamity it cannot be a matter for public observation. All around us, and day after day, families are thus smitten, and we leave them alone with their grief. At such a time even the consolation of friendship appears a mockery. 'The heart knoweth its own bitterness,' and in that knowledge none can share. We should no more shut our eyes to this fact when public characters are taken from us than when private individuals pass away; and therefore it is not our purpose to intrude upon the sorrows of those who will soon have to bury their dead out of their sight. All of us, however, and those especially who know and esteem Mr. Carl Rosa as an artist and a gentleman, will give a sympathetic thought to him in his great affliction, trusting that, to use the unmatched eloquence of the Bible, 'as his day is so his strength may be.'

"But, while we pass in almost silence over the loss of the relative and friend, we cannot so treat the loss of the artist who, for nearly 20 years, has filled a distinguished place. In this respect the death of Mme. Parepa-Rosa has a public significance, and concerns all who interest themselves in the art to which she devoted her life. The position of the departed lady—one to a certain extent unique—makes

her loss all the more important. She was no *prima donna* of the ordinary type; that is to say, she did not flutter from capital to capital, picking up gold and diamonds, making herself a target for bouquet-throwers, and striving only for the gratification of vanity and cupidity. The loss of one or even two such would not be a very serious matter from an artistic point of view, and we may doubt whether it would be mourned with a mourning inconsolable. There is a higher position than the one just described, and to that position, by a fortunate combination of circumstances, Mme. Parepa Rosa attained. Her marriage with Mr. Carl Rosa and her hearty sympathy with his enterprises imposed upon her a distinctive mission, to which she was fully equal, and the claims of which she discharged with rare ability and zeal. It is unfortunate for England that this will meet with more general recognition across the Atlantic than here. At the outset of his managerial career, Mr. Rosa saw that English opera, to which he mainly devoted himself, had sunk so low as to make its resurrection well nigh hopeless, and hence his choice of the United States as a field for his own enterprise and the ability of her who was, in a double sense, his 'help-meet.' What the husband and wife did for English opera in America the Americans can best tell, and in justice it must be said that they have always fully acknowledged their obligation. Mme. Parepa Rosa speedily became the favorite of our cousins, and not only so, but a favorite whose honors were held in perpetuity. Season after season passed, and rival after rival disputed her sway; but Parepa Rosa remained first in public affection, the artist who could depend upon a welcome from Canada to the Rio Grande, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific. How, in this great position, she conscientiously discharged her duty to art in general, and to English opera in particular, all the world knows; and America, whatever England may do, will gratefully acknowledge the fact over her tomb. We hoped, when she returned to her native land, that a similar good work would be begun among ourselves, and that to Mme. Parepa Rosa and her husband we should owe, in a great measure, the resuscitation of our national lyric stage. Very soon these hopes were strengthened by the formation of an opera company under Mr. Rosa's management, and by the fact that he had taken our so-called 'national theatre' for a short experimental season. But, while man proposes, it is God who disposes, and the future had been ordered otherwise. None of us could know that the axe was laid to the root of the tree from which we hoped to gather fruit. We know it now, and, apart from the loss of a gifted and amiable artist, we see the results in the abandonment of a noble enterprise and the return of English opera to its normal condition of despair. This it is that gives to the death of Mme. Parepa Rosa so great a significance at the present time, and makes her departure an event of more than common gravity. She was the strongest hope of a cause which, without her, has, as far as we can see, scarcely any hope at all.

"But, irrespective of what might have been, the deceased artist will go to the grave sincerely mourned. Her gifts and accomplishments, her amiable character, and her blameless life endeared her to all. By all, therefore, in a greater or less degree, will Parepa's loss be felt; and over her tomb England and America will say with one voice,

"Requiescat in pace!"

[From the Times, Jan. 23.]

MADAME PAREPA ROSA.—Our musical readers will regret to hear that this popular and distinguished singer, after severe and protracted illness, died on Wednesday night at her residence, No. 10, Warwick-crescent, Maida-vale. Mme. Parepa's *debut* in this country was made at the Lyceum in May, 1857, the second year during which, after the burning of Covent Garden, Mr. Gye held the Royal Italian Opera performances at the smaller theatre in the Strand. The opera was Bellini's *Puritani*, the character allotted to her being, of course, that of Elvira, the heroine. Some years ago she married Herr Carl Rosa, a violinist of great ability and a musician of recognized acquirements. Accompanied by her husband, Mme. Parepa undertook an operatic tour in America, visiting almost every part of the New World where a musical audience could be found. The tour was immensely successful; and, on returning to England, Mme. Parepa projected a scheme for the revival of English Opera in London, with herself as chief singer, and her husband as conductor of the orchestra. All was prepared, and the first work to be presented was an English version of Herr Richard Wagner's so often announced, but never actually produced, *Lohengrin*. Mme. Parepa (or Mlle. Euphrosyne Parepa, as then styled) was in her 21st year when she appeared as one of Mr. Gye's *prima donnas* at the Lyceum Opera; consequently at her death she had not attained her 37th birthday. Mr. Rosa has been compelled to return to town, leaving the conduct of his very successful tour in other and competent hands. With respect to his projected season of English opera at Drury-lane in the spring, the preparations for which are in a very advanced state, he finds he has no alternative but to abandon, or at any rate postpone, it indefinitely. He has most unwillingly come to this decision, for he had set his heart on bringing the adventure to a successful issue; and the *Lohengrin*, as regards the costumes and the necessary getting up of the choruses, &c., is in a most forward state.

## London Choral Societies.

[From the Orchestra.]

What may be the number of musical associations in this great metropolis we know not; but it appears there are no less than forty-two specific societies called choral. Some of these unions have clearly originated from the fellowship of amateur musicians in church worship; others from a strong affection for the highest class of vocal music; and a third class from the desire of some organist or other professional musician to be the captain of something or other, and thus keep his professional flag under observation amid a countless fleet led by no admiral, and yet ready for any enterprise that may bring money and reputation. There are thirty-two specific unions for orchestral music; and to these may be added some thirty, if not more, glee, part-song, and madrigal associations. There are one hundred and twenty musical clubs who advertise themselves of distinction and importance, and how many there may be who care not for fame of this sort it is impossible to say; but it would not be unreasonable to set down the metropolitan musical societies at a number not less than two hundred and fifty. Many, if not most of these guilds, have arisen from the establishment of church choirs, and they are clearly the outgrowth of zeal and affection which find no place or occupation in church worship. The parochial organist of

any merit is quickly surrounded by a numerous band of amateurs—of whom some sing and others play—and the weekly service offers no field for the exercise of all this talent. Nothing remains but to club together, take a room, hire some music, and set to work on Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Bach. There is no specific Sunday music available for their parish church, for our anthem composers never write orchestral anthems or orchestral hymns; and so the zeal and energy of the parochial musical society is spent upon extracts from large oratorios, portions of the last century Mass, with here and there selections from the new oratorios of the last adventurous cantata. Never was there greater need for concentration, centralization, and co-operation; and nothing would so soon turn all this loose and ineffective exertion into real power and grand result as the establishment of church orchestras, and the admitted recognition of instrumental music as a necessary part of divine service. It is no new thing, no innovation, for it is part and parcel of our Reformed Church. Queen Elizabeth had her orchestra in her Royal Chapels; Charles the Second had his chapel orchestra of distinguished musicians; the Duke of Chandos retained Handel as his chapel-master, who took good care to engage a band of no ordinary abilities.

At the present moment we are inclined to think not much for music will be done in our Chapels Royal, unless Mr. Cusins or Dr. Elvey set seriously and determinedly to work. The cathedrals are hopeless. The large churches in our metropolis are in the hands of incumbents who will do nothing without episcopal sanction, and our Lord Bishop of London is more occupied in the discussion of the sinfulness of little sins than the joyfulness of great songs. Every possible device that human ingenuity can conceive is suggested for the white-washing of human infirmity, but no dignitary in our establishment ever thinks of music. What bishop is there of modern days who can imitate the example of King David, the sweet singer of old, who wrote his poetical confession of sins, little and great, and then sent it to his chief musician to be set to appropriate expression in music? Fortunately for the people of those days there were no sermons; poetry was the school-master abroad, and the musician the interpreter and the prophet. Mr. Forster has too little of the spirit of Isaiah within him to consider the ways of Sion, and Mr. Gladstone, however great in Troy and Homer, now neglects to prove his armor in Solomon and Jerusalem.

The lovers of the church orchestra may look in vain for help from people of this sort. They like music as they like plate and wine and pictures—good for their drawing-rooms and dinner-halls. And they like music, songs after dinner and short piano pieces in the drawing-room. And they like a home orchestra when there is to be dancing—some three or four fiddles, flute, hautboy and a cornet or two, with a double bass. Even a bishop begins to think a fiddler not so despicable an animal when he sees him inspiring his sons and daughters with the magic strains of a Strauss waltz. But what is good for the twinkling of feet on Saturday is not good for either heart or head on the Sunday. The fiddler must lock up his Stradivarius on the Sabbath and betake himself to the wheezing of stop diapasons, the suffocated wailings of imitation flutes and oboes, and the pious bemoanings of pedal pipes. These are the tones befitting the sinfulness of little sins, and all that intense egotism which marks the Sunday humility of a right episcopal congregational worship. Not too much grief, or you, in your sorrow, may fail to remember the collection-plate; no joy, or you may discard the lugubrious admonitions of the preacher.

In these days of doubt and indecision—the getting a reading or a thinking man into a parish church is no ordinary difficulty. The petty dogmatism of one class, and the pseudopious platitudes of another, offer little attraction

to the intellect, and these are still the prominent features of what should be meetings for worship. There is no church without the people, and worship is the expression of the people. Music is the only universal language, and was given us for worship. Music precedes all preaching, and every missionary enterprise is founded upon it. We send our missionaries abroad, and they find they can do nothing without hymns and tunes. Nevertheless, with this example before our eyes, we go to the women, sing women's hymns, women's tunes, listen to women-organists, and when the Communion comes on—the rites and ceremonies, such as baptisms, marriages, and burials—it is still the general rule to lock up our organs, empty the choir stalls, and drive the musicians out of the church. Nothing more clearly points out the hostility of our dignified clergy to the proper use of music in service than their notions of celebrating the rites and sacraments of the church. Until very recently it was the practice in the cathedrals for organist, choir, and choristers, to decamp at the first intimation of the Sacrament. And in all Evangelical churches this ceremony is as silent as death. What bishop ever asks a candidate for holy orders if he can sing the "Gloria in Excelsis" to the simplest chant? How few churchmen in the metropolis have ever heard this, the oldest hymn in Christendom, sung at all! Is it not the grossest act of hypocrisy to preach upon the welfare of our national church, and not to take the slightest interest in the singing of the "Gloria in Excelsis"? Can it be believed that a special choir of supernatural beings were sent here upon earth to sing this heaven-born song, and the clergy are to be seen mumbling it to some dozen or dozens of kneeling and silent listeners? Ah! believe it, or not, it is so.

Now this one appalling fact explains the whole mystery of our forty or fifty choral associations, our orchestral unions, our glee societies, music-halls, bouffé operettas, decadence of the English opera, and all our other mistakes and degradations in musical matters. Our rulers may shave the reredos clean and smooth, they may depose the baldacchino, break up the carved work, demolish the painted windows, down with the white garment and exalt the black, if they will only shorten their sermons, and let the people have their own singing in their own common book of worship. All we ask is to let the people have their rights. Why should not every parishioner play in church who can play some instrument sufficiently well to be a member of an orchestral society? Why are the members of our choral societies to remain silent on the Sunday, for no one can suppose they will be found to join in the singing of queer tunes and queer anthems? See the width and span of these choral and orchestral societies—Brixton, Battersea, Bow, Camberwell, Canonbury, City, Crouch End, and so on to the end of the alphabet. Throats and hands, everywhere—in all directions, save in the parish church.

Well, if the churches are to be closed against the musicians on Sundays, may they be opened in the early morning or for late evensong? May the choral societies and the orchestral unions claim their parish churches for an hour or two on the week day? If they must not sing the "Gloria in Excelsis" on Sunday, may they do so on Monday? Is England to be the only nation that keeps the people silent over the most ancient of all songs of the Christian church? Are the angels never to have any fellow worker in songs in this our great metropolis? Is a melancholy-looking parson reading in low sepulchral tones this glorious hymn—is such a sight as this to be an illustration of the faith, zeal, and love of our very much respected Bishop of London, and our no less respected Archbishop of Canterbury? Nicemissionaries are these prelates for our music halls, theatres, and the popular places of amusement, in which, of course, no bishop would ever put his foot. But we fancy we hear the right reverend exclaim: "How can I get the people away

from these scenes of—" There, there, my lord, stop if you please; it is you, and those that think with you, who drive the people into places where they would never go, if you had not deprived them of their rights in the parish churches. Give them their due of music in their churches on the Sunday and the weekday; let these choral societies and these orchestral unions leave their holes and corners and come into the broad light of the sanctuary, and you will have done something for those "cordis et stakes" of the church of which we are almost tired of hearing and puzzling over.

Again, look at our Royal Albert Hall, open on Sunday afternoons for some organ playing, but shut up in the evening. When are we to have our Latin College evening song with its grand old music in this magnificent Hall? When shall we hear the Latin Psalms and a Palestrina motet in this great temple of song? What a gathering of Oxford and Cambridge grantees would there not be! All Eton, Winchester, Harrow, Westminster, and every grown-up public school boy in the kingdom! And where scholars and gentlemen go, there will go the general public. No one thing would have a more beneficial influence upon music in this country than an alternate service in Latin and English on Sunday evenings at the Royal Albert Hall. The Choral Society is ready, the Amateur Orchestral is ready, and these might be reinforced by the best of the forty choral societies and thirty orchestral unions. Who can oppose this proposition? Who condemn? The new Act permits the shortening of the offices, and a little compline might be made which would satisfy all consciences and all desires. Something need be done to concentrate all this zeal and talent; and nothing will more effectually do so than its dedication to the right use and end of all music.

### Flotow.

WITH THE COMPOSER OF "MARTHA."

No opera has ever been more popular than Flotow's "Martha." Since 1849, when it first appeared, it has been performed upward of one thousand times, at all the great theatres of the world; and it still is a perfect gold-mine for its composer, who derives from it alone, aside from his other operas, an income of at least twenty thousand florins a year.

Frederick von Flotow has always been a favorite child of Fortune. Although nothing more than an amateur in 1845, and, in effect, a mere stripling, his first operatic venture, "Alessandro Stradella," proved so thorough a success that his name was at once ranked among the foremost operatic composers of Europe. At the age of twenty-three he was hailed as a peer by Meyerbeer, Auber and Rossini, and his beautiful opera rapidly made the tour of the world.

His next composition, *Martha*, made him the most popular of his brethren among the operatic composers of Europe. It had two hundred successive representations at the Opera Comique, in Paris, and soon became a favorite with the opera goers of all civilized nations. The younger son of a Mecklenburg nobleman, whose patrimony consisted of a few sterile acres, saw suddenly flowing into his coffers tantémes such as had not been even paid to the renowned composers of *Robert le Diable* and *William Tell*. Airs from *Martha* were played at every concert; they were drummed and sung by young boarding-school misses and whistled by the street-boys in all great cities of the world.

I remember seeing Flotow at the first performance of *Martha*, in his native city of Rostock, in Mecklenburg-Schwerin. He was then a handsome youth, looking younger, indeed, than he really was. The applause bestowed upon him by his fellow-citizens evidently delighted him beyond measure. He blushed to the roots of his hair when the enthusiastic audience called him, at the end of the performance, before the curtain.

A few days ago I saw him again. It was at his beautiful château Priesitz, near Linz, in Austria. I was startled at the change which twenty-four years had produced in his appearance. He looked like an old, broken-down man, although he is but little over fifty. His hair was entirely white, and he was bent down like an octogenarian.

He recognized me by my Mecklenburg dialect, and, as soon as I had seated myself by his side, told me that he regretted nothing so much as that he had left his dear native country and settled among strangers.

"Why do you not return to Mecklenburg?" I ventured to ask. "I am sure everybody there will receive you with open arms."

"No, no," he replied, firmly, "you do not know what would happen. Look at this (and he produced a ponderous epistle); 'this is a letter from the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, Frederick Francis, who withdraws from me the appointment of grand-ducal *maitre de chapelle*, because I married the sister of my divorced wife! Oh, the hypocrisy of these fellows on their petty thrones!'

I durst not say anything on this painful subject. For ten years past this unfortunate event has cast a gloom over Flotow's life. He has been most severely censured for his second marriage. But what are the facts? When scarcely old enough to know his own mind, Frederick von Flotow was induced by his parents to marry a young girl who was secretly affianced to another. Their wedded life was wretched in the extreme. They parted by mutual consent. Flotow's present wife idolizes her gifted husband, and he is happy with her. Nevertheless, he is ostracized in aristocratic circles.

He knit his massive brow as he complaining of how people had recently treated him. "I have led," he said, "my whole life long a most laborious existence. If I have won successes, they were due, above all things, to hard work, to unremitting toil. The score of 'Martha' I rewrote four times before I allowed it to be played; and I have been still more painstaking with my subsequent operas. And what has been the result? Peculiarly, I have no reason to complain; for, although I am not rich, I am comfortably situated, and certainly richer than any of my ancestors have been for many years past. But what a life of disappointments I have recently had to lead! Will you believe that the Parisians, who were once my most ardent admirers, have completely ostracized me? I have my new opera, 'Haida,' ready for the stage. I am free to say it is quite equal to any of my previous productions. And yet not a manager in Paris dares to perform it, because I am a German. It is tabooed in Berlin, because my Grand Duke of Mecklenburg hates me; and, in Vienna, because the Emperor of Germany will not permit its performance in Berlin. Has any modern composer ever been so unfortunate?"

"Why not start your new opera in London?" I interrupted.

"No, no, my friend," replied Herr von Flotow, "you don't understand that. A new opera, to succeed in London, must first have been given in Paris. Listen," he added, going to the open piano in his room, "and tell me what you think of these melodies."

And he began to run his fingers over the ivory keys with wonderful mastership, playing new and delightful airs.

"Are these melodies pretty?" he asked.

"Pretty," I replied, "they are enchanting! Better than *Martha*!"

And yet he cannot get this opera performed! Such are conventional and national prejudices.

Herr Von Flotow has three children by his second wife, who herself is an eminent pianist. He leads at Prenitz the life of a hermit, going but rarely to Vienna. His tenants are greatly attached to him, on account of his kindness toward them.

During my long conversation with him, I heard Herr von Flotow pass some curious opinions on the other great composers of the day.

"Meyerbeer," he said, "was incomparably the greatest of them all. Rossini ruined himself by writing too much. Bellini was a musical confectioner, producing excellent sweetmeats. Donizetti would have been very great had he not been an Italian. Wagner is grand but often too terrible. Verdi was very promising, but had deteriorated of late. Ambroise Thomas was an imitator of Adam. Gounod had made a great mistake to write anything after *Faust*. He should have taken warning by Auber's experience."

All this was well said, extremely caustic, but not always just. Herr von Flotow had evidently been soured by what he considers his bitter disappointments. He is a spoiled child of Dame Fortune. The slightest mishaps make him angry.

Upon leaving the chateau, I caught a glimpse of Frau von Flotow. She is a portly, good-looking lady of forty. Her serene face does not indicate in any way that she is conscious of the trouble she has caused her illustrious husband. And yet he is

smirking under it, and to me it seems more than probable that his days are numbered. He looks certainly very old and broken-down.—*Berlin Tribune*, translated for *Appleton's Journal*.

#### The Bach Association in Cologne.

On the last day but one of the year just ended, the Bach Association, which has for some time past been under Hiller's direction, gave the first of its usual public performances in the large hall of the School of Music. There was a numerous audience, including several reverend gentlemen. The chorus consisted of about seventy members, and the hall, though rather ill-adapted for every kind of instrumental music, proved highly favorable to the general effect of voices united exclusively for a *capella* choruses. In addition to the choral compositions there were solo performances by Hiller and Mlle. Lehmann. A Canzone for piano, written by Frescobaldi, an old organist of St. Peter's in Rome (1587-1653), and played by Hiller, figured as introduction; its noble simplicity fixed, as it were, the local coloring of the entertainment. After the Canzone, the admirably trained chorus came forward with one of Palestrina's celebrated—but not, therefore, as a matter of course, generally known—Lamentations: "Cogitavit Dominus." It is four and five-parts, being at first sung by three women's voices and a tenor, to which, after a time, the bass is added. The execution was modelled on the antique style, and may have been the correct one; but it is our own opinion that in the Sixtine Chapel, where perhaps some valid tradition on the subject still exists, we have remarked stronger contrasts of light and shade.

The treatment of the voices is more lively and more freely developed in "Libera nos," by Felice Anerio, Palestrina's successor, as composer of the Papal Chapel, and, as the execution was inspired, in the most delicate manner, by the peculiarities of the composition itself, the audience were enabled to appreciate to the full its antiquely austere grace. Admirable, also, was the impression produced by Eccard's short and vigorous six-part chorus: "Vom Leiden Christi." Eccard, born in 1545, and once chapel-master to Georg Friedrich, Margrave of Brandenburg, combines the melodic beauty of the Italian school with sturdy German force, as evidenced by the interesting treatment of the voices and the richness of the modulations. Another, but no less musically beautiful and sacred field of ancient composition, was then, after an instrumental intermezzo, opened up with three chorals, one certainly, "Wachet auf," by Michel Praetorius (1571-1621), rather in the stiff old German style; the incomparable six-part "Crucifixus," by Lotti (died 1741, as chapel-master of the Church of St. Mark, Venice), and the universally known "Eine feste Burg."

There is something tragic in the fact that this song which our Martin Luther wrote in the most intense German spirit, which announces in characters of stone to all future times the religiously-poetic purport of the epoch of the Reformation, and in whose depths Sebastian Bach, besides other composers, so loved to pursue his subtle researches, should at last have been stolen and parodied by Meyerbeer in *Les Huguenots*. It appeared on this occasion in the four-part arrangement of Leo Hassler (1564-1612), and soared vigorously on high, as though the chorus, excited by its very task, had spread out all its pinions. We might have fancied that it had by different paths at last reached the loftiest heights, where, in solitary majesty, J. S. Bach, the greatest of our old composers, sits enthroned, terminating and perfecting that which in manifold shape and in less complete forms tended towards him, for all coming musical generations a model and a master, nourishing, as it were, with clear water from the rock the green pastures which stretch out at the foot of this real musically-historical mountain-source.

We actually seemed, while listening to this eight-part "motive for a double chorus," to be standing upon an elevated watch-tower, with our mind's eye gazing at another such tower situated far away, and soaring with other formations quite as high; this second tower bore upon its loftiest eminence the new and divine symphonic temples of Beethoven. In the one as in the other, everything is similarly perfect: the motive simple and inwardly true, as though immediately sprung from our own consciousness, nobly born, and yet of the people; heavenly beauty in the melodies; clearness, agreeable rhythm, and unfathomable depth in the workmanship; the harmony thoroughly healthy, clear,

fresh, and, at the same time, re-echoing with passing changes of a prophetic nature, as though coming from some transcendental world. For, in every art, genius is revealed by the fact that at its breath the veil which hangs before the enigma of our being appears to move. Only execution rising to the height of its subject can do justice to such poetic power. On the present occasion, apart from a few trifling blots, the execution was extraordinarily successful, a highly meritorious fact, with so difficult, nay, almost obstinate a work. Even for experienced solo singers it would be a difficult task, and besides this, the *colorature* run up to the high B flat. The distinct pronunciation characterizing the well educated *dilettanti* who constitute the Bach-Chorus was of immense service. The singers wound up with three "Weihnachtslieder," or "Christmas Songs," by Prätorius. The first two were workman-like, but dry compositions; the third, "Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen," was very fresh and pleasing. The last strophe was sung with especially beautiful expression.

In addition to the piece already mentioned, Hiller performed some other compositions from the collection of old piano-forte music published by Litolff. They were by Jacques Champion de Chambonnières (died 1670), Henry Dumont (1610-1674), and Jean Baptiste Loeillet (1660-1728), the last piece being a jig, with a lively twelve-eight measure, reminding one of the modern tarantellas, and Bach's Chromatic Fantasia. The first pieces were given with reverence, accuracy, and the subjection of the individual to the work, while the last were played with great bravura, all of the pieces moreover being rendered with that sonorous and rich tone which is one of the features of Hiller's touch. Of the contributions of Mlle. Lehmann, her rendering of the cantata by Nicolo Porpora (1687-1767), struck us as not being quite in keeping with the spirit of the composition. It was not before the charming "Arietta" by the same master that the correct point was attained. Combined with the already well-known excellencies of this esteemed operatic artist were ready expression and fire; the applause was great and merited.

The Parliamentary vacation has most opportunely enabled us to dilate on this important musical entertainment at length which, during the season, we are unfortunately compelled to forego. We are delighted to see the Bach Association pursuing its noble aims so energetically and intelligently under a sceptre which has so frequently changed hands. Around J. S. Bach, the perfecter of the old, and the prototype of the classic era, are grouped a large number of second and third-rate composers associated with him by elective affinity. It is, therefore, perfectly right this mighty eagle should give the Association his name, and at the same receive the smaller feathered brood under his wings.—*Kölische Zeitung*.

#### Mendelssohn in Paris.

[From FREDERICK HILLER'S "Recollections."]

It was through Habeneck and his "Société des Concerts" that Mendelssohn was introduced to the Parisian public in 1837. He played the Beethoven G major Concerto—with what success may be seen from his published letters. The "Midsummer Night's Dream Overture" was also performed and much applauded. I was present at the first rehearsal. The second oboe was missing—which might have been overcome; but just as they were going to begin, the drummer's place was also discovered to be empty. Upon which, to everybody's amusement, Mendelssohn jumped on to the orchestra, seized the drumsticks, and beat as good a roll as any drummer in the Old Guard. For the performance a place had been given him in a box on the grand tier, beside a couple of distinguished musical amateurs. During the last *forte*, after which the fairies return once more, one of these gentlemen said to the other: "C'est très-bien, très-bien, mais nous savons le reste;" and they slipped out without hearing the "reste," and without any idea that they had been sitting next the composer.

The termination of Mendelssohn's connection with that splendid orchestra was unpleasant, and hurt him much. His Reformation Symphony was proposed to be given, and a rehearsal took place. I was not present, but the only account which our young friends gave me was that the work did not please the orchestra. At any rate it was not performed. Cuvillier's description was that it was "much too learned, too much fugato, too little melody," &c. &c. To a certain extent the composer probably came round to this opinion, for the Sym-

phony was not published during his lifetime. But at the time I am writing of he was very fond of it, and the quiet way in which it was shelved certainly pained him. I never referred to the occurrence, and he never spoke of it to me.

A few other far more painful events took place during that Paris winter. One morning Mendelssohn came into my room in tears, and at first could find no words to tell me that his friend Edward Rietz, the violinist, was dead. Everything that he said about him, the way in which he described his ways and his playing, all showed how deeply the loss affected him. In his published correspondence years after, I found his grief expressing itself in a higher and calmer strain, but at first it was difficult for him to control himself in the very least.

Then came the news of Goethe's death, which touched me also very deeply, though a life of such wonderful completeness should perhaps dispose one more to admiration than to regret. Mendelssohn gave me a most detailed account of his last visit to the "alter Herr," and of the sketch he had given him on the piano of the progress of modern music from Bach to Beethoven. He spoke very feelingly of the terrible loss Goethe's death would be to old Zelter, adding—"You will see, he will not long survive it." He was right—a few months later, and Zelter followed the friend who had granted him a little corner in his palace of immortality.

On the whole, as we may also see from his published letters, Mendelssohn led a pleasant easy-going life in Paris, and gave himself up to the enjoyment of the moment without hesitation. A large part of his time was devoted to chess; he was a capital player, and his usual antagonist Michael Beer, the poet, a brother of Meyerbeer's, and Dr. Hermann Franck, only occasionally succeeded in beating him.

Franck would not allow that he was inferior, and upon this Mendelssohn invented a phrase which he relentlessly repeated after every victory—"We play quite equally well—quite equally—only I play a very little better."

Of Meyerbeer, who was always a very sincere admirer of his talent, Mendelssohn saw but little. A funny little story occurred early in the visit. Mendelssohn was often told that he was very like the composer of "Robert," and at first sight his figure and general appearance did give some ground for the idea, especially as they both wore their hair in the same style. I sometimes teased Mendelssohn about it, but it seriously annoyed him, and at last one morning he appeared with his hair cut completely short. The affair excited much amusement in our set, especially when Meyerbeer heard of it; but he took it up with his usual invincible good-nature, and in the nicest way.

Chopin had been at Munich at the same time with Mendelssohn, and had given concerts there, and otherwise exhibited his remarkable abilities. When he arrived in Paris, as a complete stranger, he met with a very kind reception from Kalkbrenner, who, indeed, well deserved the highest praise as a most polished, clever, and agreeable host. Kalkbrenner fully recognized Chopin's talent, though in rather a patronizing way. For instance, he thought his *technique* not sufficiently developed, and advised him to attend a class which he had formed for advanced pupils. Chopin, always soft and yielding, was unwilling to refuse outright, and went a few times to see what it was like. When Mendelssohn heard of this he was furious, for he had a great opinion of Chopin's talent, while, on the other hand, he had been annoyed at Berlin by Kalkbrenner's charlatany. One evening at the Mendelssohn's house there, Kalkbrenner played a grand Fantasy, and when Fanny asked him if it was an improvisation, he answered that it was. The next morning, however, they discovered the improvised Fantasy, published note for note under the title of "Effusio musica." That Chopin, therefore, should submit to pass for a pupil of Kalkbrenner's seemed to Mendelssohn, and with justice, to be a perfect absurdity, and he freely expressed his opinion on the matter. Meantime, the thing very soon came to its natural conclusion. Chopin gave a soirée at the Pleyel rooms; all the musical celebrities were there; he played his E minor Concerto, some of his Mazurkas and Nocturnes, and took everybody by storm. After which no more was heard of any want of *technique*, and Mendelssohn had his triumph.

The relations between Kalkbrenner and Mendelssohn were always somewhat insecure, but Kalkbrenner's advances were such that Mendelssohn could not altogether decline them. We dined there together a few times, and everything went quite smoothly, though, in spite of all entreaties, Felix could never be persuaded to touch the keys of

Kalkbrenner's piano. Indeed, we were none of us very grateful for Kalkbrenner's civilities, and took a wicked pleasure in worrying him. I remember that one day, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Liszt, and I, had established ourselves in front of a café on the Boulevard des Italiens, at a season and an hour when our presence there was very exceptional. Suddenly we saw Kalkbrenner coming along. It was his great ambition always to represent the perfect gentleman, and knowing how extremely disagreeable it would be to him to meet such a noisy company, we surrounded him in the friendliest manner, and assailed him with such a volley of talk that he was nearly driven to despair, which of course delighted us. There has no mercy.

I must here tell a little story—if indeed it deserves the name—to show what mad spirits Mendelssohn was capable of at that time. We were coming home across the deserted boulevard at a late hour, in earnest conservation, when Mendelssohn suddenly stops and calls out:

"We must do some of our jumps in Paris! our jumps, I tell you! Now for it! one—two—three!" I don't think mine were very brilliant, for I was rather taken aback by the suggestion, but I shall never forget the moment.

Soon after Mendelssohn's arrival in Paris, Dr. Franck and I were waiting for him in his room, when he came in with a beaming face and declared that he had just seen "a miracle—a real miracle;" and in answer to our questions he continued, "Well, isn't it a miracle? I was at Erard's with Liszt, showing him the manuscript of my Concerto, and though it is hardly legible, he played it off at sight in most perfect manner, better than anybody else could possibly play it—quite marvellously!" I confess I was not so much surprised, having long known, from experience, that Liszt played most things best the first time, because they gave him enough to do. The second time he always had to add something, for his own satisfaction.

Of Ole Bull, the violin player, afterwards so famous, I have a few recollections. He had just escaped from the theological schools, and was in Paris for the first time. His enthusiasm for music was boundless, but of his own special talent he gave no sign whatever. He was the pleasantest listener imaginable, and his views about music and musicians, expressed in very doubtful if not the less amusing German, were a real treat to us. We often invited him to dinner, and played to him endlessly. A few years later, I saw him again as the celebrated virtuoso, but the Swedish element which so delighted me at first had become rather a mannerism.

Mendelssohn went occasionally to see Cherubini. "What an extraordinary creature he is!" said Felix to me one day. "You would fancy that a man could not be a great composer without sentiment, heart, feeling, or whatever else you like to call it; but I declare I believe Cherubini makes everything out of his head." On another occasion he told me that he had been showing him an eight-part composition, *a capella*, (I think it was his "Tu es Petrus") and added, "The old fellow is really too pedantic: in one place I had a suspended third in two parts, and he wouldn't pass it on any condition." Some years later, happening to speak of this incident, Mendelssohn said: "The old man was right after all; one ought not to write them."

Felix's wonderful musical memory was a great source of enjoyment to us all as well as to himself. It was not learning by heart so much as retention—and to what an extent! When we were together, a small party of musical people, and the conversation flagged, he would sit down to the piano, play some out-of-the-way piece, and make us guess the composer. On one occasion he played us an air from Haydn's "Seasons"—"The trav'ler stands perplex, uncertain and forlorn"—in which not a note of the elaborate violin accompaniment was wanting. It sounded like a regular pianoforte piece, and we stood there a long time "uncertain and forlorn."

The Abbé Bardin, a great musical amateur, used to get together a number of musicians and amateurs at his house once a week in the afternoon, and a great deal of music was got through very seriously and thoroughly even without rehearsals. I had just played the Beethoven E flat Concerto in public, and they asked for it again of me on one of these afternoons. The parts were all there, and the string quartet too, but no players for the wind. "I will do the wind," said Mendelssohn, and sitting down to a small piano which stood near the grand one, he filled in the wind parts from memory, so completely, that I don't believe a note even of the second horn was wanting. And he did it all as simply and naturally as if it were nothing.

It was a famous time. When we had no engagements we generally met in the afternoon. We willingly gave up lunch so as not to have to go out in the mornings, but a little before dinner-time we used to get so frightfully hungry that a visit to the confectioner was absolutely necessary. I believe we fasted simply to get an excuse for indulging this passion. In the evening we often went to the theatre—often to the Gymnase Dramatique, for which Scribe at that time wrote almost exclusively, and where a charming actress, Léontine Fay, had completely taken possession of us. She acted in Scribe's plays the parts of the young wives who get into doubtful situations, which call into play all their grace and common sense. She was a slender brunette, with wonderfully dark eyes, indescribably graceful in her movements, and a voice that went straight to your heart. The celebrated Taglioni, the first to make that great name famous through the world, was also one of our favorites. No one ever made me feel the poetry of dancing and pantomime as she did; it is impossible to imagine anything more beautiful and touching than her performance of the *Sylphide*. Börne says of her somewhere: "She flutters around herself, and is at once the butterfly and the flower." But this pretty picture conveys only a part of her charms.

I had written a pianoforte Concerto not long before, and played it in public, but the last movement did not please me, and having to play it again during this Mendelssohn winter, I determined to write a new Finale, which I secretly intended should be a picture of Léontine Fay. I had begun it, but the concert was to come off so soon that Mendelssohn declared I should not get my work done in time. This of course I denied, so we made a bet of a supper upon it. My friend's opposition excited me to make a real trial of skill, and I scored the orchestral part of the whole movement without putting down a note of the solo part. The copyist, too, did his best, and the result was that I contrived to play the Concerto with the new Finale on the appointed day. Felix paid for the supper, and Labarre, the well-known harpist, a handsome, clever, and amusing fellow, was invited to join us. How far the portrait of Léontine Fay was successful, I leave to be decided by its own merits, though Felix confessed it was not unlike her.

#### "Don Giovanni" with Nilsson as Elvira and Maurel as the Don.

[From the Advertiser, Feb. 13.]

The reputation of poor companies, and of those, too, which are only respectably good, generally goes to pieces in the attempt to perform "Don Giovanni." It is, therefore a special triumph for Mr. Strakosch that they can add to their list of successful efforts, an uncommonly smooth, spirited and equal representation of this trying work. It is to be distinctly said that there were serious blemishes in the performance, Mlle. Maresi, well-meaning as she is, being utterly unable to cope with such a part as that of *Donna Anna*, and Signor Colletti's hoarse and much shaken voice proving an unworthy instrument for the execution of the sublime music of the *Commendatore*. But on the whole, in spite of these and some other drawbacks, we doubt if the entire opera has ever been better given in Boston. Certainly the *Donna Elvira* of this cast was immeasurably in advance of any that we have ever seen, and the *Don Giovanni* has never been surpassed, if it has ever been equalled, here.

Mme. Nilsson's assumption of *Donna Elvira* was a revelation to almost every one in the audience. It has been the misfortune of our public—suffering in the matter from the parsimonious provision of managers—to know this interesting lady and her beautiful music only through the medium of third rate performers. Only two artistes have, within the past sixteen years, made any impression in the part,—viz., Mme. Ghion, during Maretzky's venture of last fall. Both of these performers were admirable vocalists, but neither of them had, apparently, a conception of the possibilities of the part, and neither of them had the dramatic ability necessary to make the character interesting, if its opportunities had been comprehended. The elegant attire, handsome face and dignified bearing of this *Donna Elvira* as she entered upon the stage were refreshing enough, after recollections of the poor, draggled, dejected creatures who have moaned through the abbreviated music of the part. In action and in song the contrast was of course equally conspicuous. The *Donna Elvira* of Mme. Nilsson is a high-bred,

Molto Allegro.

f  
cresc.  
cresc. ff  
fp

A page of handwritten musical notation for piano, consisting of two staves. The top staff uses a treble clef and the bottom staff uses a bass clef. The key signature changes throughout the piece, indicated by various sharps and flats. The time signature is mostly common time. The notation includes many dynamic markings such as *sf*, *cresc.*, *f*, *fp*, *p*, *sforz.*, *cresc.*, *ff*, *Ped.*, and *\**. The music features a variety of note values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The manuscript is written in black ink on white paper.

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The musical score consists of five staves of handwritten notation for piano. The notation includes various dynamics such as *sf*, *ff*, *sf.*, *f*, *p*, and *p.p.*. It also features several performance instructions: *Ped.* (pedal), *ad lib.* (at liberty), and *col 8va.* (at 8th octave). The music is written in common time, with a mix of treble and bass clefs. The notation is highly detailed, showing specific note heads and stems, as well as harmonic changes indicated by Roman numerals above the staff.

The musical score consists of five staves of piano music. The top staff uses a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The second staff uses a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp. The third staff uses a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The fourth staff uses a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp. The fifth staff uses a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The music includes various dynamics such as *cresc.*, *sf*, *dim. p*, *pp*, and *ff*. Performance instructions include *Ped* and an asterisk (\*). The music features a mix of sustained notes, eighth-note patterns, and sixteenth-note patterns.

high-spirited woman, smarting under a keen sense of wrong, and seeking for reparation or revenge. In listening, therefore, to *Leporello's* "Catalogue Song," with its perfectly harmonious, good-natured and ingenuous insolence, her principal emotions are anger and a feeling of outraged dignity; grief and mortification struggle to the surface of her mind occasionally as the horrible record is recited, but everything else, except just indignation, is forgotten as the roguish servant concludes with his "*Voi sapete quel che fa,*" chanted with the most "damnable iteration," and the whip helps out the threat of the flashing eyes.

In this interpretation for the first time we have sense and coherence. How different this from the foolish and inartistic meekness with which other performers have compelled the noble lady to listen to the insults of a menial! In the scene which follows for *Donna Elvira, sola*, nearly all her best and most striking music occurs. The great—and—as it has been called by one critic—"absurdly difficult" aria, "*Mi tradi quel alma,*" has been generally omitted altogether, though it was skilfully sung by Ghioni and Di Murska. Mme. Nilsson not only keeps it to its place, but she restores the very strong piece of trying recitative which precedes it. In the latter *Donna Elvira* flames out in passionate accusation of her lover, prophesying his speedy doom, but almost in the utterance of her curses her wrath fails, and by the easy gradations to which the feminine mind is accustomed, she soon passes into the longing and pathos of "*Mi tradi,*" disclosing the existence of an affection which still hopes and sighs for reconciliation with the faithless *Don*. All of these ideas were expressed in Mme. Nilsson's interpretation with consummate judgment and absolute power; and in her subsequent denunciation of *Don Giovanni* to his friends, in the exciting scene of the ball-room, in the trio of the "window scene," and in the final fruitless attempt to bring the hardened sinner to repentance, the same insight and the same complete art were employed with every finest gradation of expression.

Mme. Nilsson's singing was very nearly perfect, her most remarkable being, of course, the finished delivery of the "*Mi tradi*." The result of her recent severe cold appeared in a slight fatigue after the performance of the aria just mentioned, and made the beginning of the quartet "*Non ti fidar*" less agreeable than might have been anticipated. But the imperfection was momentary, and throughout the rest of the evening, in all her music, but most noticeably in the "Masks' Trio" and the lovely "*Ah taci ingiusto coro*" of the mock serenade, Mme. Nilsson's voice was heard in its most exquisite purity and sweetness.

M. Maurel's *Don Giovanni* was about as faultless as any operatic performance can be conceived to be. The qualities which we have attributed to his *Don Carlos* were displayed here,—unaffected dignity, ease and grace; but with these the airy gaiety and dash of an ideal *Don Giovanni* were combined. M. Maurel's action was everywhere in fine taste and in exactest harmony with the needs of the situation and the character; and in the final scene with the *Statue* it was tremendous in suggestive power, while displaying a remarkable reserve; but his share of the duet "*La ci darem*" might be cited as a most remarkable specimen of his method, the artist's manner being most quiet and refined, but winning and seductive almost beyond belief. The contrast between this number as thus rendered and the same piece as given by "baritones of the pulling and hauling variety" is striking in the extreme. M. Maurel sang all his music, especially his portion of the duet just mentioned, the "*Finch han dal vino*," and the "*Deh vien alla finestra*,"—in a style which may be simply described as unexceptionable. A single thing we have to regret, and that is that such an artist as M. Maurel should have made the mistake of reconstructing the close of the melody last mentioned. Mozart admits of no correction even from such an artist. Of the other impersonations, Signor Nannetti's *Leporello*, Mlle. Torriani's *Zerlina* and Signor Scolara's *Masetto* were noticeably good. Signor Nanetti played, as ever, with a careful avoidance of exaggeration, but his *Leporello* was exceedingly vivacious and strong, as well as ingenuous in its humor. The "Catalogue Song" was interpreted with peculiar neatness and good judgment. Mlle. Torriani acted with her usual discretion, and her singing was more than commonly sweet and as fluent, clear and smoothly executed as ever. The duet "*La ci darem*" and "*Batti, batti*," were both encores. Signor Scolara's *Masetto* was a capital piece of acting, the rustic simplicity, maladroitness and stubbornness being expressed with admirable shrewdness,

and the music being given with far more fulness and power than has usually been vouchsafed to us in the part. The only fault we have to find with Signor Scolara was that he should have omitted the "*Ho capito,*" and that may have been done in accordance with Signor Muzio's advice.

Signor Campanini appeared as *Don Ottavio*, and by his spirited and manly bearing and action invested the part with a force and interest which it has seldom attained on our stage. His voice seemed to be in good condition at first, and he gave the very difficult "*Dalla sua pace*" with charming sweetness and with excellent purity of tone. His part also in the "Masks' Trio" was well sustained; but by the time he had reached "*Il mio tesoro*" his voice was husky and unsteady, and he sang frequently out of tune, a few brilliant upper notes demonstrating the vocal capacity of the artist when in good physical condition. It is worthy of mention, and that especially by way of grateful acknowledgment to Signor Campanini, that "*Dalla sua pace*" which is as beautiful as it is difficult, has not been sung in its place in the opera upon any Boston stage more than twice before in sixteen years. Mlle. Maresi in *Donna Anna* was mediocre in merit, but never positively offended. Nearly all the finest music of the part was cut out, the aria "*Or sai chi l'onore*" being retained, however, though not its long introductory recitative. All the concerted numbers were accurately and smoothly given, and the "Masks' Trio," which was encored, has never been better interpreted within our hearing and recollection. Miss Cary's temporary illness and absence were much deplored, but the most cynical auditors did not seem to doubt that her excuse was a good one.

In many small details good taste and judgment were agreeably displayed, as in the minuet walked by professional dancers in the ball-room scene; in the setting, according to the stage direction, of a "court-yard" for the sextet of the second act, which has usually been placed most preposterously in an ordinary apartment; and at the close of the opera, in the demoniacal "business," in which there is yet much room for improvement. The orchestra were fairly equal to the demands made upon them last evening; the chorus, fortunately had little to do. The audience was enormous in size, outnumbering, we suppose, by some hundreds the immense company of Wednesday evening.

#### Verdi's Aida.—First Performance in Boston.

[From the Evening Gazette, Feb. 7.]

The story presents many opportunities for fine dramatic situations, a circumstance of which the librettist has taken every advantage. In fact, we know no more compact, consistent and skilfully arranged libretto than this. Judged from its musical standpoint, we are not inclined to call "*Aida*" a great work, but it is a highly interesting one. It is a thorough change from the method of "*Ernani*," "*Trovatore*," and we think shows rather poverty of invention than a deeply considered "new departure." Much has been said regarding the resemblance the scoring and treatment of this work bears to the manner of Wagner, but we can discover naught of Wagner in it, save an avoidance of such things as continued melody, conventional cadences, and old forms. Of his wealth of harmony, his broad and massive scoring, and his poetical imagination, there is not a trace. Any careful comparison in this connection could only result in causing Verdi to appear as a dwarf by the side of such an intellectual giant as Wagner. Withal it is a strong and an impressive work, full of dramatic fire, intense passion, and vigorous thought. We have here the Verdi of yore in the excessive use of brass instruments, but we have a vast advance in his method of using the strings and reed instruments. While his other operas, "*Lombardi*," perhaps, excepted, have more the appearance of improvisations than of deeply pondered works, "*Aida*" shows ripe reflection in almost every bar. There is, moreover, in this work an attempt to invest the music with a local color that adds much to the interest of the score, and it would not surprise, to learn that several of the most original numbers in the opera, especially the ballet music and the priests' chorus, "*Immenso Ftha*," are bits of genuine Egyptian melody. This chorus is admirably treated, and with a contrapuntal skill of which Verdi has given but few evidences. The entire work is distinguished by a warmth and a spirit almost barbaric in their intensity, and which are immensely effective in lending it an appropriate character.

The duet between *Aida* and *Amneris*, in the sec-

ond act, is the most artistic number in the opera. Here the conflicting emotions of the rival women are finely painted in the music that falls to them, and the composer seems to have devoted unusual care to its orchestration. Another charming and characteristic number is *Aida's* aria, "*O cieli azzurri*," which has a very expressive oboe obligato accompaniment. The duet, "*Fuggiam gli ardori insipiti*," in the third act, between *Aida* and *Radames*, where she conjures him to fly with her, is also finely conceived and treated. There are but few if any phrases that the listener can carry away with him, but he does carry away an impression of unity, power, and vividness. This opera strikingly illustrates the changes that have affected musical art during the past few years. Whereas melody was formerly a necessity, it has almost disappeared, and the public now submit to declamation, over which it once yawned. Recitative, which was only an adjunct, has now usurped the foremost place. It would almost appear that Rossini foresaw this when he left an annual prize for the composer of the best opera, and made it imperative that melody should prevail in the work of the successful competitor.

As it is but natural to expect, the Verdi of old makes himself visible in many portions of the score, especially in some of the choruses; but it is with a more solid and masterly effect than has been common with him. The work is undoubtedly his masterpiece, and grows in interest and power from beginning to end. It will well repay a frequent hearing, and will improve on acquaintance. That it will ever achieve the popularity that has attended some of his other productions, we greatly doubt; but it is a finer work of art than any of these, and is in advance of any opera from an Italian composer that we have had for many years. Compared with "*Faust*," or even "*Mignon*," it must take second rank in almost every essential. We must add that it was received by the audience with the utmost enthusiasm. The first act had a somewhat chilling effect; but from that point the interest increased, and only culminated as the curtain finally descended.

The artists all deserve high praise for the manner in which they interpreted the music that fell to their share. Mme. Torriani was the *Aida*, and she brought to bear upon its impersonation rare vocal skill and admirable histrionic powers. Her conception of the part was natural and strong, and she carried it out in a manner that reflected most creditably upon her. The alternate dignity, pathos and fire the character calls for were manifested with equal judgment and propriety, and in the more passionate scenes she reached a height that surprised no less than delighted her listeners. The best part in the opera, and a very exacting one at that, vocally considered, is *Amneris*, which was played by Miss Cary. She sang the trying music grandly, and with a depth of expression and a dignity of sentiment with which no shadow of a fault can be found. She was in superb voice, and entered upon her task in a spirit that was but little short of enthusiasm. In the acting of the part, which affords a fine field for a great lyric actress, Miss Cary significantly failed; not through neglect or want of earnestness of purpose, but because it is far beyond her powers. Moreover, she manifested an absence of artistic feeling in the constancy with which she sang to the audience in the most impassioned scenes, paying no heed to her rival in one instance, or to her lover in another. Where she should have vented her rage on the former, she vented it on the audience; where she should have shown her anguish and her despair to the latter, she showed it to her listeners. She seldom cast her eyes in the direction of the artists concerned with her on the stage. The effect was almost absurd. Amneris says of *Aida*, "That pallor, that disorder, reveals the mystery—the fever of love," and she does not cast one glance at *Aida* to discover that fact, but gazes steadily at the parquette. She says to *Aida*, "Well, what new passion assails thee, *Aida*?" and proceeds to conjure her to unburthen her heart to her, but without as much as turning an eye in the direction of the person addressed. And this all through the opera, in scenes of maddening remorse, wild passion, and pleading despair. It may seem unkind to so sternly point out these faults, but Miss Cary has too much talent, shows too much promise, to be allowed to proceed on the wrong path, to be flattered into ruinous self-content, without a warning word. If Miss Cary will but reflect how she would act if placed in similar scenes to those in which she is placed in this part, and take the result of her reflections as a guide, we are certain she will cease to offend in this respect.

Sig. Campanini's *Radames* was a remarkably fine

performance. He was in better voice than he was on Tuesday night, but he was still the victim of a severe hoarseness. He fairly thrilled his listeners, on several occasions, by the fervor and the passion which marked the more dramatic portions of his role. His efforts on this occasion, even clouded as they were by the misfortune under which he labored, were of a nature to completely justify the glowing reports of his powers that preceded him hither. A very fine display of acting, and an equally fine display of singing, were given by Signor del Puente as Amonasro, the half-savage king of Ethiopia. It was one of the most effective and most artistic efforts of the evening, both in the picturesque and spirited character of his acting, and the warmth, energy and expressiveness of his singing. His exceedingly rich voice was heard in its fullest development, and proved to be exceptionally fine. He achieved a complete and most gratifying success. Signor Nannetti, as the high priest, Ramfis, brought all necessary dignity and repose to his impersonation of the character, and the King of Signor Scolara was no less satisfactory.

The opera was finely placed upon the stage, and a praiseworthy attention was paid to the details of scenery and accessories. The costumes were brilliant, rich and appropriate, and a satisfactory number of auxiliaries were brought forward in the scenes demanding them. The ballet was more than acceptable,—a rare thing in opera here, and the properties were unusually good. The chorus acquitted itself admirably and the orchestra deserves especial mention for the careful manner in which it performed its task under the baton of Signor Muzio, who is certainly the most energetic and skilful of conductors. The artists were called out at the end of each act, and, judging by the enthusiastic spirit in which the audience received the work, and the glowing and deserved encomiums that have been expressed in all quarters regarding its claims upon public attention, we may safely state that the public interest has been stimulated to a point that causes the next performance of the opera to be looked forward to with eager expectation.

## Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON. FEB. 21. \*1874.

### Italian Opera.

The fortunes here of Strakosch, with his north-star Nilsson, have been in marked contrast with those of Maretzke and Pauline Lucca. Probably a more brilliant success, in a material point of view, was never achieved in Boston, or in New York either, in any one short "season" than was achieved by Mr. Strakosch in the fortnight which came to an end last Saturday at the Boston Theatre. It consisted of nine evening and two afternoon performances. Nearly every time the vast auditorium was literally packed; and not once, even on what are called "off nights," was there an audience which could not be called very large. The total receipts are said to have been \$46,000. In such results much is due to fashion, humors of the moment, and many things not musical nor pertaining in any way to aesthetic taste or culture; but there must also have been in the performances an unusual amount of true artistic merit to make all this possible in a community so long accustomed to good music.

The principal artists were remarkably good for these times. In Mme. Nilsson we had the loveliest, purest voice and finest genius now upon the stage. There were two more sopranos, new to us, one excellent in all she undertook, one good in some things; there was Miss ANNIE CARY, now an admirable contralto, albeit somewhat cold; there was the famous young tenor CAMPANINI, and CAPOUL, with all his sweetness and his perhaps too much of intensity; there was the refined and noble baritone MAUREL, whom we had admired in concerts; another satisfactory one in Sig. DEL PUENTE, and excellent bassos in Sig. NANNETTI and Sig. SCOLARA; besides some useful artists of secondary consequence; a chorus better than we have heard upon the stage

for some time, and an orchestra above the average on such occasions; all under the baton of a masterly conductor, Sig. Muzio, relieved at times by Mr. BEHRENS.

The repertoire was very much the usual story, with the exception of the new Verdi opera, "Aida." There were given during the first week: *Les Huguenots*, *Mignon*, *Aida*, *Lucia*, and Gounod's *Faust*; in the second week the lion's share was Verdi's: *Il Trovatore*, *Ernani*, *Martha*, *Don Giovanni*, *Aida* and *Lucia* were the pieces in their order.

In the first week we had the opportunity of hearing only *Gli Ugonotti*, on the first night, and of that only the second, third and fourth of the five acts. It must rank among the notable events of the fortnight, if only for Nilsson's Valentine, which for consistency and beauty, and for fine dramatic power, we have never seen quite equalled, although we have heard the opera in Paris and Berlin. Her voice, though she looked pale and ill, and evidently labored under some hoarseness, seemed not only sweeter and more musical than ever, but also to have gained decidedly in volume; the low tones in the impassioned scenes were very powerful. A beautiful reserve and maiden delicacy and tenderness characterized the first scenes. In the great duet of the fourth act with Raoul she was superb in lyric declamation and in action. She showed imaginative genius throughout all the part, and not merely the electrifying force of outright passion at the climax of the drama. This singer is as great in her reserves, as in the moments of white heat.

Sig. Campanini is somewhat awkward in his movements, and he was too hoarse to allow of more than a conjecture of the power and beauty of his voice. But in a few telling, manly high tones it shone through the cloud, and in the great duet he threw himself into the situation with a splendid whole-souled fire and energy. The charming flowery melody of the second act,—the Queen amid her ladies in the gardens—was on the whole nicely rendered. Mme. MARESI, with a voice of moderate power, but rather sweet and flexible, sang the part of Marguerite agreeably; and Miss Cary, in the Page's songs, was nearly all that could be desired; her rich voice, all so evenly developed, and each tone so fully formed; her excellent phrasing and her finished execution, and her hearty, easy entering into the humor of the quaint playful melody, with all its galant flourish, were worthy of Meyerbeer's happiest creations.—Sig. Nannetti has hardly weight and calibre enough for the old Huguenot soldier, when we think of Formes; but he has a good rich voice and manly bearing, and won favor. He has appeared to more advantage since in other parts. The Saint Bris of Sig. Scolara was full of dignity and truth in the impersonation, while his voice is rich and powerful, and his style of song and declamation highly artistic and refined. Sig. Del Puente, too, acquitted himself nobly as Le Nevers.

That this elaborate grand opera was adequately presented as a whole, cannot be said, of course. Neither the orchestral nor the stage requirements were by any means completely met; nor can we expect that in a flying visit of a travelling company. Yet some of the ensembles were passably well suggested, while some, like the stern scene of the *Benediction des Poignards*, were more remarkable for brutal, stunning noise (at least if you sat on the side of the drums and brass) than for impressive music. The female choruses were good, however; and the instrumentation, abridged and sketchy as it was, was on the whole as effective as could reasonably be expected under the circumstances.

In very grateful contrast to the "heavy" *Huguenots* must have been the pretty, unpretending opera of *Mignon*, the next evening, in which Nilsson is so

charmingly original. And we all remember how she restored the whole fresh beauty of the faded old *Lucia* picture when she was here before, (but this time she was prevented by illness from appearing, and the part was taken—acceptably, by all reports, by Mlle. Torriani), and what a beautiful consistent whole her Margaret in *Faust* was and must still remain.

Of Verdi's Egyptian opera, "Aida," we lost the first performance, and virtually lost a large part of the second, what with the sleepiness and dulness consequent upon three successive nights of sitting through long operas in a crowded theatre. We did get a general impression of a more thoughtful style and treatment, more refinement and complexity of instrumentation, than we have been accustomed to ascribe to Verdi's music; at the same time no lack of his old coarseness; while there are marked imitations of Gounod and of Wagner; and the advantage of a better plot and libretto than usual, and a rather gorgeous spectacular array, with quaint dances, as well as choruses of priests and priestesses that seem to have a local coloring. We do not care to offer any opinion on the work until we have had time to peruse the printed score; and meanwhile we copy on another page an article, which in the main agrees with such impressions as we got in our one unprepared, imperfect hearing, merely giving here the plot as condensed by the critic of the *Tribune*:

The action takes place "at Memphis and Thebes during the time of the Pharaohs." Aida, the daughter of Amonasro, king of Ethiopia, is a slave in the palace of Pharaoh, at Memphis. She there wins the love of Radames, a young Egyptian general, who, at the opening of the opera, is chosen to lead the king's army against an invading force of Ethiopians. He returns in triumph, bringing Amonasro a prisoner, and the first use he makes of his favor at court is to beg the lives of the captives. The king offers him, in reward for his services, the hand of his daughter Amneris, who has long loved him; but Radames, faithful to Aida, declines the proffered honor. Amonasro now persuades Aida to obtain from Radames the secret of a pass which the Egyptian troops have left unguarded, and the lovers are about to fly together by that road, when the vengeful Amneris and the high-priest Ramfis, who have overheard them, denounce Radames as a traitor. He is condemned to be buried alive, and, after refusing to save his life by renouncing Aida and accepting the hand of the princess, who loves and hates him by turns, he is immured in the vaults under the great temple of the god Ptah. In this dreadful place he finds the faithful Aida awaiting him. She has concealed herself there in order to share his fate, and they die in each other's arms.

**SECOND WEEK.** Save us from *Il Trovatore*, we pray always, and from the *Trovatore* crowd, with its insane plaudits and hoarse, stunning bravos after every strong high note which baritone or tenor makes while ignore it the music. Is that one high note any better than all the other notes? we should like to know. We have no doubt that Mme. Nilsson sang and acted admirably in her part, but we could wish that there were no such parts (such opera we mean) for such as Nilsson; these true Queens of Song are, to our mind, too good for it; is it not time it should be left to the queens of song, the *caïs chantans* and the musical old clothes shops? No, says the manager, you see it "draws!"

The performance of *Ernani* was chiefly notable through the appearance of MAUREL in the character of "Carlo Quinto." His rich, expressive baritone, his artistic method and delivery—only he has the tremolo!—his fine, noble form, and dignified and kingly bearing, made a most favorable impression. Since Badiali we have hardly had his equal. Mlle. TORRIANI, both in song and action, always careful, earnest, sympathetic, while she seemed to labor somewhat under a cold, made a good Elvira. The tenor who should have been Ernani being ill, the part was taken by a singer, who must be credited with good intentions and hard effort. The Don Silva of Sig. NANNETTI was dignified and musically good and telling. But then—what then? What is *Ernani* now? There was a time, in the green "sallad days," when, after long and cloying senti-

mental sweets of Donizetti and Bellini, the first blast of *Ernani* was as refreshing and exciting to us as our Northwest winds after dog-days.

But now the music seems so "flat, stale and unprofitable!" Scarcey excepting the "Carlo Magno" grand finale, and the buoyant ball room music, what is there in it all which one would care to carry into the next world with him, as he fain would so much of Bach and Beethoven and Mozart? These coarse and brutal Verdi commonplace, raucous and clamorous choruses of camp and market-place, these screaming unisons, these iron-clad, hard melodies, in which we have the most original and individual part of Verdi,—how happy one is to forget it, to be no longer haunted by it, and how grateful for the least bit of Mozart which makes us forget it and reassures us of another world in music!

Well, after so much iron-clad, so much unmilitated tragedy, no wonder that the hope of seeing and of hearing Nilsson as the charming lady in the light, pretty, graceful opera of *Martha*, well worn as it is, drew one of the most immense houses of the fortnight. The first two acts of *Martha* always have some charm and freshness for us,—that is to say about once a year. The altogether beautiful and lady-like appearance of the fair prima donna in this part; her exquisitely true and natural action, as fine in its reserves as in its outright expression; her shifting play of moods, and slow confession of a deepening sentiment; these with the unrivaled loveliness, purity and sweetness of her voice, and perfect singing, are indeed a rare thing to witness, and even better now than when she took the part two years ago. Miss CARY's Nancy, too, was capital, and always came in for a large share of the plaudits. The tenor, CAPOUL sang as earnestly as ever, with the same squirming intensity of movement and gesticulation,—a trait which grows upon him; and in the main he sang well, only with so much straining after the most passionate expression, that one fears the organ may not outlive many more seasons of it. His triumph, however, was exceptional, the bravos and recalls seeming as if they would never cease. Sig. DEL PUENTE'S Plunkett was good, though he too is afflicted with some *tremolo*. But worthy of particular recognition was Sig. SCOLARA'S gentlemanly, while humorous enough, impersonation of the infatuated old Sir Lionel, a part too often run into buffoonery. His tones are firm and solid, and his delivery, especially in recitative, is excellent. The ensembles in *Martha* were effective.

Worth all the other operas of the two weeks together, and particularly welcome to the jaded sense and starved soul after so much of Verdi, was the (for these times) uncommonly good performance of Mozart's immortal *Don Giovanni*. If only for Nilsson's admirable "creation" of the role of Donna Elvira, and the really fascinating Don of Maurel, it is entitled to the fuler notice for which we have no room to-day.

### Eighth Symphony Concert.

It had been pleasant, clear, cold weather up to the day of the concert (Friday, Feb. 13); but just as music-lovers were preparing to wend their way to the Music Hall, a change came over the spirit of their dream; the skies were darkened, and the rain came down in floods, deterring not a few. Nevertheless the audience was a fine one. The programme was particularly attractive:

Concert Overture, in A, Op. 7.....Julius Rietz.  
Piano Forte Concerto, in C minor, [Köchel, 49].  
Comp. 1786.....Mozart.

Allegro.—Larghetto.—Allegretto. (Cadenzas by Hummel).

Hugo Leonhard.

Song: "Suleika." From the "West-Eastern Divan" of Goethe. Op. 14.....Schubert.

George L. Osgood.

Krakowiak : Grand Rondeau de Concert, Op. 14,  
for Pianoforte, with Orchestra, (second time). Chopin.

Hugo Leonhard.

Songs : a. "Now the shades are falling." [Nun die Schatten dunkeln]. Op. 10, No. 1.....Franz.

b. Evening : "From the wood low murmur rise." [Abendlich schon rauscht der Wald.] Op. 16, No. 4.....Franz.

c. "I'll pour all my soul's deep feeling in the cup of the li'ly, like wine." [Ich will meine Seele tauchen.] From the "Dichterliebe" Cycle of Songs. Op. 48.....Schumann.

d. Mystical Beauty. [Schöne Freunde] : "The tree-tops rustle and tremble." Op. 39, No. 6. Schumann.

George L. Osgood.

Symphony in E flat, No. 3.....Schumann.  
Vivace.—Scherzo.—Andante.—Religioso [suggested by a religious ceremonial in the Cologne Cathedral].—Alegro.

The Overture by Rietz, which has been seldom heard here, is a sterling work in matter and in

treatment; very broadly laid out, in form symmetrical, the ideas fresh and genial, and the instrumentation rich and full of subtle contrast. Very captivating is that serious melody which comes in near the middle sung by reed instruments with a *pizzicato* accompaniment of the strings, and which afterwards comes back reversed, the strings taking the melody and the reeds the accompaniment. There are frequent suggestions of Mendelssohn in it,—strong hints particularly of the beginning of the Italian Symphony. The orchestra was in full force and played it unexceptionably.—Not less must be said of the performance of the grand Schumann Symphony in E flat, which, though it came late, owing to too long pauses, and though it has two very serious slow movements, with no lack of weighty matter in the three quick ones, sparkling, exuberant and full of swing and buoyancy as they are—was listened to with deep attention and enjoyment to the end. The work of the orchestra that day has been the theme of general approbation, even the "unwilling ears" assenting.

But nothing won all hearers more completely to the pure mood of music, nothing brought them so within its magic sphere, as that wonderfully beautiful Mozart Concerto, so exquisitely reproduced, in form and spirit, through the brain and hands of Mr. LEONHARD, with felicitous co-operation in the difficult orchestral accompaniment. Many were at first disposed to look upon it as a too disinterested and self-sacrificing service on the part of the genial and accomplished pianist, to come before a public in a work which, however beautiful and full of genius and of finest art, is yet "old fashioned" and (so far as the pianoforte is concerned) slender, quiet, ineffective in comparison with the brilliant modern compositions. It surely is not just the kind of work which a piano virtuoso would choose for the first exhibition of himself *as such*; but, what is far better, he can show himself in it as a *musician*, artist and poetical interpreter, and that opportunity Mr. L. improved in the happiest manner; and such an interpreter, being on the inside of his task, knows very well, what few on the outside suspect, what mastery of the whole technique and higher art of pianoforte playing it requires to really interpret and convey the meaning and the beauty of so fine a work. We presume that this Concerto in C minor was never played before, with orchestra at least, in this country; it seldom figures in the programmes which we read of anywhere. Yet it is unquestionably one of the very best in all respects which Mozart wrote; strong, deep and earnest in its purpose—especially the first movement; fresh, significant and charming in its thoughts; exquisite in their variation, coloring, and entire treatment; a consistent, perfect whole, with plenty of contrast, one and the same inspiration calling orchestra and solo instruments into responsive and harmonious play. The first movement, as we have said, is strong and serious, with a deal of impassioned fire in it, as we commonly find when Mozart chooses this key. The instrumentation, too, is fuller than in most of the Concertos, having, besides the strings, a flute, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns and two trumpets; and the long orchestral prelude, laying down the subjects, is extremely interesting. The *Larghetto* has a short lovely melody, so simple that you are at first incredulous about its beauty or importance. But as this simple, pertinacious little melody keeps coming back, and ending off in the same coy, curt way, with scarcely any variation on itself, but somehow kindling a most emulous spirit of invention in the other instruments, and putting all sorts of charming, even frolic fancies into the heads of the group of reeds, you feel that there was quite a tree, a whole grove, full of song-birds in

that little germ. Mr. Leonhard played it all simply, just as written, not covering up thin places with the least added harmony, as if he believed in every note of it, and felt and meant it in good earnest; and the hearers felt it. Those difficult and exquisite wind instrument passages, too, came out quite happily and clearly. The last movement is in some respects the most interesting and artistically curious of all, and might be called, like one of Mendelssohn's piano works, a series of "Variations Sériesées." It is all serious and rather long; but it is full of matter, and the whole development, as well as the episode in C major, and the Coda in which the 4-4 measure gives way to 6-8, with some impassioned phrases, keeps attention still on the alert. The *Cadenzas* which Mr. Leonhard played, and with consummate execution, were by Hummel, very fine ones, particularly the first, which is elaborate.

Mr. Osgood was in excellent voice, and sang all of his choice songs, especially "Suleika," which is one of the most beautiful of Schubert's, with that expression, taste and earnest feeling which we always expect of him. Though his voice is not one of great weight, he has somehow learned the art of carrying every tone to ear and heart in all parts of great Music Hall. The group of *Lieder* by Franz and Schumann are of a nature which is most at home in a more small and private place and circle, and they are all rather of one mood, serious and sentimental, yet they proved very acceptable.

But two more concerts remain of the series. The ninth [Thursday, Feb. 26] has just four pieces in its programme. Part I. Gade's Overture: "In the Highlands," Beethoven's "Pastoral Symphony"—II. Violin Concerto, in D, by Mozart [first time], played by Mme. CAMILLA URSO; Mendelssohn's "Mélusina" Overture.

The season will close on Thursday, March 19; the Concert opening with an Overture, followed by a Concert Aria of Mozart, sung by NELSON VARLEY, and a Violin Concerto, played by Miss TERESA LIEBE. Second Part: The great A-minor Prelude and Fugue of Bach, played on the Organ by J. K. PAINE; three songs by Schumann [including the dashing, spirited "Hidalgo"] by Mr. VARLEY; Gade's first and best [C minor] Symphony.

### Chamber Concerts.

The MENDELSSOHN QUINTETTE CLUB have given two of their weekly Saturday evening concerts. The first [Feb. 7] had a small audience, what with operatic and all sorts of distractions. But there was a feast for lovers of the best in Mozart's E-flat Quintet [No. 5] which opened, and Beethoven's second "Rasoumofsky" Quartet, in E minor, which closed the concert. Yet the enthusiastic plaudits and encore were for the thin Quintet arrangement of the "Midsummer Night's Dream" Scherzo, which certainly was finely executed, especially the humming-bird flute part by Mr. HEINDL. This gentleman's flute solo, likewise ["The Wind," a Caprice, by Bréciard], and Mr. HENNIG's masterly performance of a Concerto by Golttermann for the Violoncello, were received with signal favor.

The second programme was as follows :

Quartet in G, No. 29 [first time].....	Haydn.
Concerto in G minor for Violin, [first time in Boston].....	Max Bruch.
	William Schultz.
Scherzo from "Scotch Symphony".....	Mendelssohn.
Arr. for Quintet by Thomas Ryan.	
Sextet in G, Op. 36, for two violins, two violas and two 'Cellos [second time in Boston].....	Brahms.

We were sorry to lose this concert, especially the first two numbers, but we felt we owed a duty to the Complimentary Concert to Miss ALICE DUTTON, which took place that same evening at McHaney's Hall. There was a goodly audience, who listened with much interest to the young lady's clean, forcible and brilliant execution of the G-minor Concerto of Mendelssohn, the Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue of Bach, and of the modern school, the *Gondoliera*, *Tarantella* and, *Cancione* by Liszt, entitled, "Venezia e Napoli." In the Concerto the orchestral accompaniment was played on a second grand piano by Mr. LANG. It was either the fault of the instrument, or of the way in which it was placed, or of a too intensely nervous energy of effort on the part of the fair artist in the *forte* passages, but the sound was hard and cutting,—too much hammer, so to speak. Otherwise the rendering was excellent, and in the other pieces the fault in a great measure disappeared. In the absence of Miss PHILLIPS, who continued ill, Mrs. H. M. SMITH sang very finely Franz's beautiful setting of Tieck's "Slumber Song" and songs of lesser consequence; and Mr. FESSENDEN, with his sweet tenor voice, contributed some "good old" namby-pamby "ballads." Mr. WULF FRIES played a Violoncello solo [Adagio and Mazurka] by Schubert, very finely. Accident deprived us of the first of Mr. BOSCOVIRZ'S Piano Recitals. We hope for better luck the next time.

**"Judas Maccabæus"** by the Salem Oratorio Society.

The Salem Oratorio Society presented Handel's "Judas Maccabæus" to a fair audience in Mechanics' Hall last evening. The oratorio, which has occupied the attention of the society for some months, was rendered so as to do great credit to the singers and their conductor. The chorus, numbering upwards of two hundred, was seated to much better advantage than at previous concerts of this society, and as a consequence the effect of their singing was more than doubled. The voices showed their freshness, and the earnestness which has characterized the performances of the society. The parts were well balanced, the strong alto, however, sometimes predominating slightly. The smoothness with which the choruses were sung was especially noticeable. The audience was coldly inappreciative until the conclusion of the splendidly rendered chorale "O Father! whose almighty power," and the following fugue "And grant a leader bold and brave," when the applause became general. "Lead on, lead on" was most acceptably rendered, as was the opening chorus of the second part, "Fall'n is the foe!" The magnificent harmony of the grand chorus, "See the conquering hero comes," was so finely given as to call forth an enthusiastic encore, in answer to which portion of the chorus was repeated. The closing chorus, "Hallelujah! Amen," was rendered with the same pleasing precision that characterized the earlier efforts. The general effect was somewhat marred by the persistent way in which a majority of the tenors and bassos kept time with their scores and heads. The chorus was assisted by Mrs. J. M. Osgood, soprano; Mrs. Jennie Twitchell Kempton, alto; Mr. William J. Winch tenor; and Mr. John F. Winch bass. Mrs. Osgood sang all the portions assigned to her with most pleasing perfection, rendering the difficult solo "From Mighty Kings" with great clearness in the delicately modulated trills. For this effort the artiste received a hearty encore, but she merely bowed her acknowledgments. Mrs. Kempton was suffering somewhat from hoarseness. Her best effort was decidedly the opening air of part three, "Father of Heaven." Mr. William Winch acquitted himself most creditably, although he seemed a trifle nervous at times. His articulation was most perfect, and in the recitative and succeeding aria, "Tis well, my Friends," the difficulties of the composition were fairly mastered, and the audience appreciated the effort. Mr. John Winch assumed those solos assigned to the bass, bearing the brunt of first solo performances before the expectant audience. His first recitative showed a want of distinctness of articulation, but this fault was overcome later on. The orchestra, the Germania, deserves all that can be said in praise. Mr. G. W. Sumner presided at the organ, doing well what little he had to do. Mr. Zerrahn conducted in his usual acceptable way. The audience came not only from Salem, but Danvers, Peabody, Beverly, Lynn, Chelsea and Boston. Special coaches and a special train were provided for those who were interested.

—*Daily Advertiser.*

**The Swedish Vocal Quartet.\***

The walls of Paris are covered with posters, ornamented with portraits, and announcing the Concerts of the Swedish Vocal Quartet, composed of two sopranos and two contraltos, Mlle. Hilda Wideberg (1st soprano), Amy Aberg (2nd soprano), Maria Pettersson (1st contralto), and Wilhelmina Söderlund (2nd contralto). These young ladies were first heard, last Sunday, at the Concerts Populaires, and, the subsequent evening, at a performance specially offered by them to the Paris press. They are making a grand European tour, and have already travelled, before visiting us, through Russia, Germany, Belgium, and Holland. Their success has everywhere been very brilliant. To give an idea of it, I will transcribe the lines consecrated to them last November, by the Leipzig *Signale*, a musical paper justly esteemed in Germany: the writer's appreciation is even overflowing with enthusiasm:

"The singing of these four charming blonde Sirens acts like a spell. Their appearance on the platform has something severe, nay, solemn, about it. Are they human voices or the soft chords of a harmonium which strike our ears? The most complicated harmonies are blended with incredible purity. No matter what these ladies sing, the mere sound which escapes from their throats suffices to carry us away with magic power. Their Swedish songs, now melancholy and severe, now sparkling and joyful, are presents to which we are utterly unaccustomed. We can safely assert that the fair Swedes

\* From *Le Soir*.

took our public by storm, and created a *furore*. These four virtuosos—four voices and one soul—are named, commencing with the soprano: Hilda Wideberg, Amy Aberg, Maria Pettersson and Wilhelmina Söderlund."

The praise, as the reader perceives, is worked up to white heat. Yet, though no doubt slightly exaggerated, it hits the mark, and the performance of the Swedish Vocal Quartet is really curious and interesting. The execution of the four young ladies is indeed surprising, both as regards its ensemble and rhythmical precision, and the delicate finish of the light and shade, as well as the certainty of intonation, even in cases of the most unusual harmony, and the most difficult intervals. The voices, too, are beautiful, fresh, and sonorous, expansive and powerful; we might fancy them the four pipes of an organ set vibrating by a learned and experienced hand. The ladies sang some folk-songs, of which the authors' names were not mentioned—one of them especially, that entitled "Fanker du att jagförlorader ar," being perfectly adorable, full of softness, poetry, and melancholy—and various melodies signed Lindblad, A. Söderman, Ohlsson, J. Hallstrom, and Eisenhofer, names totally unknown to us. Of all these composers, only one, Lindblad, is not a complete stranger, having produced in his native country two or three operas, published a large number of *Lieder*, and had the glory of being one of the masters of the celebrated singer, Jenny Lind. But Swedish art, which is very restricted, and, moreover, destitute of individuality, is utterly unknown abroad.

The fair young Swedes, all pupils of the Stockholm Conservatory, have been received with marked favor in St. Petersburg, in Vienna, at the Gürzenich, Cologne, in Brussels, and in Antwerp, and will not apparently be less fortunate among us. Their singing, now melancholy and tender, now piquant and joyous, is extremely pleasing, and, if not very high and superior art, is, at least, very honorable art, remarkable as regards perfection of execution, and characterized by a flavor of its own. In addition to this, the modest and becoming deportment of the young ladies renders them very interesting, immediately enlists the sympathy of the audience, and helps to obtain for them a favorable reception. Among their songs, I mentioned especially, besides the one I have mentioned, "Sjung! sjung!" ("Sing! sing!") by Södermann, and "The Serenade," by Eisenhofer.

ARTHUR POUIN.

Mlle. OSTAVA TORRIANI. Our opera goers have been so impressed with the sterling excellence of Mlle. Ostava Torriani, both as a singer and an actress, that a few words concerning her past are not out of place at this time. She is of German parentage, having been born in Hamburg. Her real name is Ostava Tornquist. She belongs to an aristocratic family, and, added to the distinction of blood, has experienced the qualifying advantage of a thorough instruction from the best masters, by which she is doubly fitted to adorn the lyric stage and to shine socially. She early developed her innate musical ability, and the wise course of aiding and unfolding her already expanding powers was adopted by sending her to Paris, where she studied under Delile Sèdie. Subsequently she became pupil of Rossini, by whose advice she sought the cultivation of the Italian schools, receiving instruction from the famous Lamperti in Milan. She progressed so favorably under these auspices that she decided to begin her public career in the place where she concluded her studies, and, five years ago, consequently, she made her debut in Milan. With her, as with others, true merit was not unrecognized by the public, and she became unusually successful in her following appearances in the principal theatres of Italy, Spain and Germany, and also in those of Paris and London. She came to this country last winter with the newly-organized Strakosch troupe, and made her first appearance in "Lucia," at the New York Academy of Music. She has during the season sung in "Lucia," "Rigoletto," "La Sonnambula," "Martha," "Don Giovanni," "Ernani," "Il Trovatore," "Mignon" and "Aida." She was the first person in this country to assume the title role of the latter opera. She has become very much pleased with the New World, and, as is not remarkable, has a particular liking for Boston, whose audiences she thinks very appreciative. The public, on its part, has found in Mlle. Torriani a conscientious artist, with a fresh voice, of generous fulness, a gratifying warmth of manner, and a masterly execution; a judgment in which the audiences generally and the critics particularly have coincided, in the cities in which this lady has sung during the winter.—*Globe*.

**Special Notices.**

DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE  
LATEST MUSIC,

Published by Oliver Ditson & Co.

Vocal, with Piano Accompaniment.

Alone forever. 4. D (minor and major) to f.  
"Break, lonely heart!"  
Barri. 40

Very sad and pathetic, but also very musical.

Kyrie Eleison. 4. Eb to e.  
Boott. 35  
"And the stars came forth to listen  
To the music of the sea."  
Longfellow, beautifully interpreted.

Strauss! Blue Danube Waltz, for the Voice.

5. "Valziamo sempre, senza cessar."  
Grossman. 75  
"O how the sweet sound echoes around."

A very neat arrangement of the famous waltzes. The Italian words float easily from the lips, and persons with high and flexible voices will render the song very finely. Most of it is easy, but there are some cadenzas and trills (which may be left out) which require a good execution.

Why art thou sighing? 4. G minor to e.  
Willis. 30  
"Spring from my heart has fled,  
She that I loved is dead."

A "November" moan, but so graceful and musical that the minor effect is dispelled by the beauty of it.

Doubting. 4. F to a.  
Dinsmore. 40  
"You say that you love me, and can I believe  
Those low whispered words are but meant  
to deceive."

Capable of great expression.

Tho' lost to Sight, to Mem'ry dear. 4. Eb to g.  
Emerson. 35  
"Sweetheart, good-bye! The fluttering sail  
Is spread to waft me far from thee."

The beautiful words are antique though not antiquated, dating from 1701. The music is elegant and worthy of the composer.

Longing. Canzonetta for Contralto. 3. G to d.  
Barker. 35  
"Over the sea send him to me,  
Whom in my heart I long to see."

Mr. T. T. Barker takes pity on the Alto singers, and here provides for them a graceful love song. Gliding o'er the Lake. 3. F to g.  
Pratt. 30  
"The stars are gleaming above,  
Bright eyes are beaming below."  
A "gilding" boat song (Barcarolle). Words by Geo. Cooper.

The Angel at the Window. 3. G to e.  
Tours. 40  
"On the angel's wing I placed her,  
And gazed till they were gone."

A pretty poem about the angel who came for my loved one, with most appropriate music.

Little Lost One. Song & Cho. 3. F to f.  
Mary Smith. 30  
"Softly come at silver twilight  
Angels in their pure array."

A beautiful, simple touching ballad.

**Instrumental.**

Alessandro Stradella. 4 hands. 3. F. Beyer. 75  
A neat and effective duet, and quite easy.

Memories. Nocturne. 4. Db. Ella F. Locke. 60  
The subject does not require the perfectly quiet and smooth flow of a genuine Nocturne, and the lady's memories are evidently of many sunshiny as well as shady hours. Still these varied feelings are admirably portrayed in the music, which may safely be pronounced *very good*.

The Shepherd Boy. 4 Hands. 3. G. Wilson. 50  
This arrangement is quite as melodious and richer than the 2 hand arrangement.

Avant le Danse. Valse Romantique. 5. Db.  
Mattei. 75  
Not like the "Invitation à la Valse" which might have suggested its title, but more piquant, startling, brilliant, and is a very delicate and taking waltz.

Chant du Soir. (Evening Song). Romance. 4.  
Dorn. 40  
Simply constructed of a rich, harmonious evening song or hymn, with neat arpeggios brought in just when taste requires them, for ornament.

Le Zephyr. Moreau. Elegant. 5. F. Harmston. 40  
The blackness of its pages may frighten timid players, but a little courageous practice will reveal the fact that its rapid notes fit easily to the fingers, and prove that they can learn a very sweet and at the same time showy piece without much trouble.

ABBREVIATIONS.—Degrees of difficulty are marked 1 to 7. The key is marked with a capital letter: as C, B flat, &c. A small Roman letter marks the highest note, if on the staff, an italic letter the highest note, if above the staff.

